

ABSTRACT

Method and apparatus for controlling the calibration of an instrument. In a representative embodiment, a method includes determining instrument calibration status, wherein the determination is made automatically by the instrument examining calibration history data stored by the instrument. When instrument calibration is past due, a user is notified that the calibration is past due, wherein the notification is initiated automatically by the instrument. The user can decide to make the measurement with the out-of-calibration instrument. Otherwise, the instrument is removed from measurement service, the instrument is calibrated, the calibration history stored by the instrument is updated to reflect a new time that a new calibration is due, and the instrument is returned to measurement service. Also described are techniques for calibrating only those signal paths, subsystems, and ranges are actually being used or may potentially be used. In addition, if the user does decide to make a measurement while the instrument is out of calibration, he may be informed of the measurement uncertainty in making such a measurement.